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ABSTRACT

This fact sheet summarizes labor market statistics on nontraditional jobs for women and public policy, barriers, and strategies regarding such employment. Among the data presented are the following: nontraditional jobs for women are jobs in which 75 percent or more of those employed are men; 9 percent of all working women are employed in nontraditional jobs; the Job Training Partnership Act and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act are public policy efforts that support but do not ensure the entrance of women into nontraditional employment and training; lack of enforcement weakens the intent of laws and policies supportive of women in nontraditional jobs, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines of 1980, Title IX of the Educational Act Amendments of 1972, Equal Pay Act of 1973, and Executive Order 11246; the barriers that inhibit entry of women into nontraditional training and employment are complex and interrelated; among the barriers are those that are social and cultural, involve education and training, occur on the job, and involve sexual harassment; strategies to overcome barriers must focus on changing institutions and providing individual support to women. The document concludes with a list of 11 resources, including memberships, technical assistance workshops, printed resources, and human resources. (CML)

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WOMEN AND NONTRADITIONAL WORK

National Commission on Working Women
Wider Opportunities for Women

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Women and Nontraditional Work

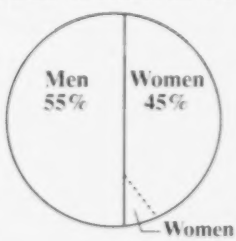
Nontraditional jobs for women are defined as those jobs in which 75% or more of those employed are men.

In 1988 51.7 million women were employed; 4.7 million women (9%) of all working women were employed in nontraditional occupations.

Occupational Categories	# of women in nontraditional jobs	Examples
Managerial, Professional	600,000	architect, lawyer
Technical, Sales, Administration	600,000	pilots, electronic technicians
Service	300,000	barbers, detectives
Craft, Production, Repair	1,200,000	auto mechanic, butcher, plumber
Operators, Fabricators, Laborers	1,500,000	typesetter, truck driver
Farm, Forestry, Fishing	500,000	farmer, logger
	4,700,000	

Between 1983 and 1988, the number of women in nontraditional jobs remained relatively unchanged at 4% of the total workforce.

Men and Women in Total Labor Force



Differences in race, age and marital status are minimal between women working in traditional jobs and women in nontraditional jobs.

Characteristics	% of All Women Working in: Traditional		Nontraditional
Race	85%	white	86%
	15%	nonwhite	14%
Age	48%	under 35	45%
	52%	over 35	55%
Marital Status	58%	married	55%
	42%	single	45%

Women in nontraditional jobs earn 20% to 30% more than women in traditional occupations.

Traditional Female Jobs	Women's Median Weekly Pay		Traditional Male Jobs
Secretary	$312	$392	Mechanic/ Repairer
Child Care Worker	$179	$281	Motor Vehicle Operator
Textile Sewing Machine Operator	$191	$440	Mail Carrier
Data Entry Keyer	$298	$335	Construction Worker

When women work in the same occupations as men they still do not earn equal pay.

Occupation	Women's Wage	Men's Wage	Wage Gap
Mechanic/Repairer	$392	$441	11%
Motor Vehicle Operator	$289	$383	27%
Mail Carrier	$440	$505	13%
Construction Worker	$335	$423	21%

Over the past 5 years, the greatest increase of women entering nontraditional jobs has been in the professional occupations.

Occupation	Percent Female 1983	1988
Lawyer	15.3%	19.4%
Physician	15.8%	20.0%
Photographer	20.7%	30.7%
Mngr., Marketing/Advertising	21.8%	32.0%

Even though most working women (74%) are in nonprofessional occupations, gains in those nontraditional jobs have been slight over the past 5 years.

Occupation	Percent Female 1983	1988
Electrician	1.5%	1.4%
Upholsterer	26.2%	22.0%
Machinist	4.1%	4.8%
Telephone Installer	9.9%	12.1%

Women and Nontraditional Work

Public Policy

Public policy supports but does not ensure the entrance of women into nontraditional employment and training.

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT

- Provides federal resources for employment and training.
- Authorizes funding for basic skills and job training in nontraditional areas.
- Aims to reduce welfare dependency and increase employment earnings.
- Targets services to special populations including women, minorities, handicapped persons and welfare recipients.

HOWEVER:
- JTPA serves only 5% of its eligible population.
- 70% of those successfully completing JTPA programs are placed in jobs at less than $5 an hour.
- In 1986 little more than 9% of all females who were enrolled in classroom training were trained for nontraditional jobs.

CARL PERKINS ACT

- Provides federal resources for vocational education.
- Focuses on sex equity in vocational education and encourages nontraditional enrollments.
- Targets single parents and homemakers through sex equity programs.

HOWEVER:
- Sex segregation in vocational enrollments has changed little in 20 years.
- In 1988 only 7.2% of school districts requested and spent sex equity funds.
- In 1988 only 5.4% of school districts received awards under single parent set asides.
- Without strong placement assistance, many female students have difficulty finding nontraditional employment after completing training.

Lack of enforcement weakens the intent of laws and policies supportive of women in nontraditional jobs.

TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964
- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion or national origin in determining wages.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION GUIDELINES OF 1980
- Interpret Title VII as prohibiting sexual harassment.
- Define two forms of sexual harassment:

Quid Pro Quo–submission as a condition of employment; and

Hostile Environment–unwanted behavior that interferes with job performance.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATIONAL ACT AMENDMENT OF 1972
- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex by educational institutions receiving federal funds.

EQUAL PAY ACT OF 1973
- Requires an employer to pay equal wages for men and women who work in the same establishment and whose jobs require the same skill, responsibility and work conditions.
- Exempts pay differences based on seniority, merit system, production or a factor other than sex.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11246
- Prohibits discrimination by federal contractors and requires them to undertake affirmative action for women and minorities.
- Enforced by Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

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Women and Nontraditional Work

Barriers

Barriers inhibiting entry of women into nontraditional training and employment are complex and inter-related.

SOCIAL/CULTURAL

- Socialization to traditional female roles
- Unsupportive family and friends
- Negative attitudes of classmates and co-workers
- Lack of self-confidence and assertiveness
- Lack of female role models
- Limited experience with tools and mechanical operations

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Limited information provided about nontraditional options
- Females directed toward traditional classes
- Lack of support for sex equity efforts by instructors and other personnel
- Lack of prerequisite classes such as math and science
- Limited access to on-the-job training and apprenticeships
- Lack of support services – child care, transportation, counseling, etc.
- Sexual harassment in classrooms
- Isolation in classrooms

ON-THE-JOB

- Discrimination in hiring, firing, promotion or lay-offs on basis of sex, race, age, physical build/ability
- Sexual harassment on-site
- Isolation on the work-site
- Lack of support from unions
- Lack of support services

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Women in nontraditional jobs or training are at greater risk of sexual harassment.

- Unwelcome behaviors can include teasing, jokes, remarks and questions, deliberate touching; letters, telephone calls or materials of a sexual nature; pressure for sexual favors; sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is against the law.

- Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act has been interpreted through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines of 1980 as prohibiting sexual harassment.

Employers can be held liable for sexual harassment.

- 1986 Supreme Court case (Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson) established right to seek legal remedy under Title VII.
- Subsequent decisions define liability, calling for explicit and timely actions by employers to prevent and end harassment.

Women can take specific steps when faced with sexual harassment.

- **Tell the harasser to stop the offensive behavior.**
- **Document all incidents of harassment.**
- **Notify your supervisor, union representative or other appropriate person of the harassment.**
- **Know your company or school policy on sexual harassment and follow its procedures.**
- **Consider filing a formal grievance or complaint if the above steps do not remedy the situation.**
- **Stay on the job.**
- **Find support from family, friends or other groups to help you through the situation.**

Cites for this fact sheet are from:

U.S. Department of Labor:
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Employment and Training Administration
Census Bureau
U.S. Department of Education:
National Assessment of Vocation Education
Researched by Heidi Mort and Janet Reisman
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Women and Nontraditional Work

Strategies

Strategies to overcome barriers must focus on changing institutions and providing individual support to women.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

- Enforce Title VII, Title IX, Executive Order 11246
- Use vocational education funds for nontraditional sex equity programs
- Target women for nontraditional training by JTPA programs
- Establish and enforce policies against sexual harassment in schools and businesses
- Train all employees on sexual harassment prevention
- Provide in-sevice training on sex equity for school personnel
- Hire female instructors in nontraditional programs
- Target recruitment messages; review materials for bias
- Provide information on nontraditional careers to families

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

- Provide career exploration activities
- Require 3 or more women on work crews
- Assist with child care and other support services
- Organize support groups for women working in nontraditional jobs
- Establish support groups for female students in nontraditional co-ed training classes
- Include assertiveness training for women as part of an overall curriculum
- Develop mentorship programs
- Establish scholarships for nontraditional students
- Recognize the achievements of nontraditional students

RESOURCES

Resources from Wider Opportunities for Women:

- Women's Work Force Network–$40 annual membership
- *Educational Equity Options Project Manual*–$45
- *Educational Equity Options Bibliography*–$5
- *All in a Day's Work Program Resource Notebook*–$25
- *Bridging the Skills Gap: Women in High Tech Industries*–$20
- *Dealing with Racism, Classism and Homophobia*–$5
- Technical Assistance Workshops on: nontraditional program development, women in nontraditional jobs, sexual harassment, sex equity

Other Resources:

- Sex Equity Coordinators: contact your state Department of Education or Public Instruction
- The Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room S3002, Washington, DC 20210; 202-523-6611
- Tradeswomen, Inc., P.O. Box 40664, San Francisco, CA 94140; 415-821-7334
- Coalition of Labor Union Women, 15 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003; 212-242-0700

About WOW: Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally to achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity for women and girls. For 25 years, WOW has been at the forefront of women's employment issues. WOW leads a national network of more than 400 independent women's employment programs and advocates in 48 states. Each year, WOW's network serves more than a quarter of a million women seeking employment information, counseling, training and jobs.

About the Commission: The National Commission on Working Women was created to focus on the needs and concerns of the approximately 80% of women in the work force who are concentrated in low-paying, low-status jobs in service industries, clerical occupations, retail stores, factories and plants. In January, 1987, NCWW merged with Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.

The NCWW encourages broad distribution of this fact sheet. Those interested in reproducing it are simply required to inform our office. This fact sheet is part of WOW's Women, Work and the Future Project funded by the Ford Foundation, Kraft and Mobil.

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